



Colorado National Monument

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

From the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

We have begun the General Management Plan (GMP) for Colorado National Monument! This is the second issue of this newsletter, intended to keep you informed and up-to-date on this very important planning process. As you may recall, the GMP will provide a 15-20 year framework for making management decisions concerning the protection of park resources while providing for visitor use.

We began the planning process with the first

issue of this newsletter in January and three public scoping meeting held in February in Glade Park, Fruita and Grand Junction. In addition, many people chose to use the web page to make their comments and issues known. In this newsletter, you will find these issues and concerns summarized as well as the planning team's first attempt at developing alternatives.

We are gratified to see the interest that the public has taken in the process and the future of the monument. We invite you to continue or become an active participant in the planning process. We are planning another series of public workshops for the last week of June. On page 5, you will find the schedule and locations for these meetings. You're welcome to attend as many as you like. We hope to see many of you there.

Your views and concerns continue to be important to us.

Please take the time to read this newsletter and then tell us what you think by completing the enclosed comment

form or respond via e-mail at the website listed below. The response that we receive from the general public, both locally and nationally, the State of Colorado, other federal agencies, and special interest groups, will be an integral part of the decision-making process.

We intend to keep you informed throughout the planning process with these periodic newsletters. If you have any comments or questions at any time, please feel free to contact us at:

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e-mail: COLM_Superintendent@nps.gov

Or visit the website at:
<http://planning.den.nps.gov/plans.cfm>

Thank you for being a valuable part of the planning process. We appreciate your interest in Colorado National Monument and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Palma E. Wilson
Superintendent



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Public Scoping and and Comments

Public scoping is the initial phase of public involvement to solicit ideas and concerns that should be addressed in the General Management Plan for Colorado National Monument. A newsletter was sent to over 200 individuals, organizations, and agencies at the end of

January 2002. Public meetings were held February 5, 6, and 7, 2002, in Glade Park, Fruita, and Grand Junction. The following issues and opportunities summarize the comments received at public meetings, from the newsletter and web site response form, and letters.



Issues and Opportunities

Preserve Park Resources

- Overall resource management strategies must address protecting, restoring as appropriate and maintaining natural resources and processes in their ecological context in coordination with neighbors (suburban homeowners, rural residents, and the BLM Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area). Many issues are interdependent with adjacent land and regional ecosystems such as invasive non-native plants, wildlife, fire management, paleontology, and natural flood, erosion, and landslide events.
- Cultural resources, including archeological sites, petroglyphs, Rim Rock Drive, historic trails,

CCC-era buildings, and cultural landscapes are not fully identified and recognized. Without an overall management strategy to protect, restore as appropriate, and maintain these resources, they remain vulnerable to deterioration and loss.

- Natural and cultural resources are threatened by trampling and vandalism by visitors, from both the rim and the perimeter.
- Scenic vistas, air quality, natural quiet, and dark night skies have been compromised by rapid development in the Grand Valley.
- More comprehensive inventory and monitoring of natural and cultural resources is needed to fully understand the monument's role in the greater ecosystem.

Provide for the public enjoyment and visitor experience of parks

- What are the desired visitor experiences and understanding, appropriate use (including the specific issues of dogs, camping, geo-caching, and special events like the Rim Rock Run foot race)? What facilities are appropriate? How should the monument address carrying capacity, visitor safety, and accessibility for people with disabilities? Should there be more emphasis on incorporating the human use and enjoyment part of the NPS mission?
- Trail heads on the perimeter need clear management direction to address local use, concerns of neighbors, resource protection, and visitors from outside of the area. Opportunities exist to fit COLM into the regional network of trails including BLM, Fruita, and Grand Junction.

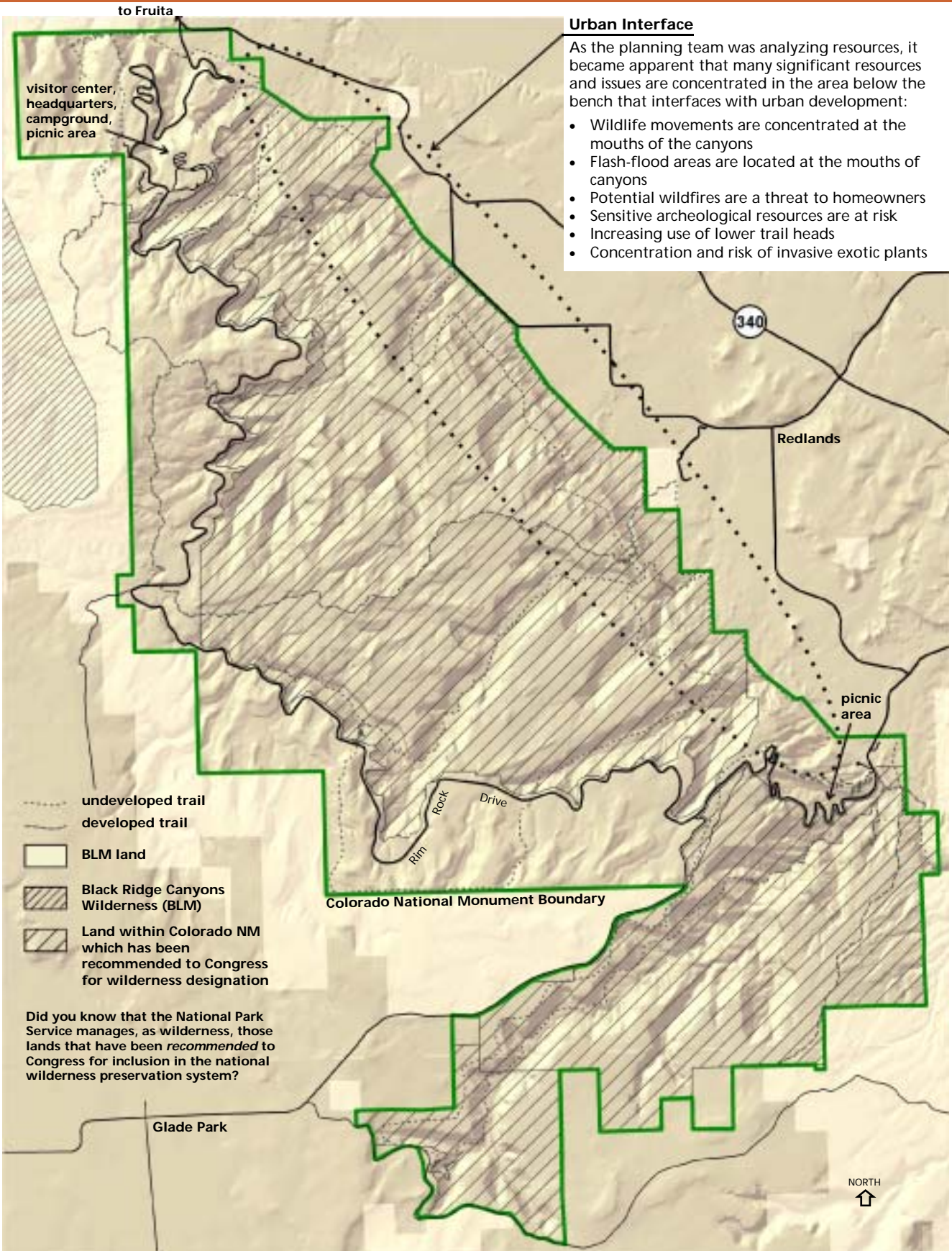


- The historic Rim Rock Drive has conflicts between visitor vehicles, bicyclists (a rapidly increasing demand), and local commercial and commuter traffic.
 - There is growing interest for shared inter-agency information for visitors because of the proximity of so many recreational opportunities offered by multiple agencies in the same region.
 - Much of the monument has been formally recommended to Congress as wilderness, and in accordance with NPS policies, it is managed as wilderness. The public is generally not aware of this.
 - Interpretive services, education and outreach are limited and could be improved.
- Ensure organizational effectiveness**
- For now and the foreseeable future, staff and funding are barely adequate to ensure maintenance of existing infrastructure and services. Overall guidance must set priorities for most efficient use of staff and funding, along with recognizing and enhancing the role of many partners and volunteers to accomplish the monument's mission. Impediments to effective fee collection must be overcome to secure that funding source.
 - All GMPs must address boundary adjustments. At COLM, a major boundary study undertaken in the 1990's considered alternatives adding substantial areas to the west of the monument and changing the enlarged unit to a national park. The result was the designation of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area administered by the BLM. This GMP will address minor boundary adjustments around the perimeter to improve management efficiency, resource protection, visitor access, and relationships with neighbors. The NPS criteria for boundary adjustments will be applied.
 - With the removal of two residences at the east end of the monument because of hazardous materials concerns, protection of the Grand Junction entrance and first several overlooks from local vandalism has become more difficult.
 - Ethnographic resources and ties with associated American Indian Tribes are not adequately identified.
 - The monument is surrounded by rapid residential development. Population growth has placed local and regional demands on a national resource. Zoning on private lands adjacent to the entrance is residential, but a change to commercial could result in incompatible "gateway" development.
 - There are remarkable opportunities to work cooperatively with the BLM, other agencies, local governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals to protect resources, provide broad visitor experiences and understanding, protect visitors, and share operational activities. There is potential common interest with neighbors in protecting rural character. Colorado National Monument was created through the efforts and enthusiasm of local people, and this planning process should strive to renew positive public interest and support.

Top Park Values at Risk from Urbanization (next 15 – 20 years)

- Keep it like it is
- Scenic vistas
- Air quality
- Flora and fauna
- Historic structures
- Archeological sites
- Cultural landscapes
- Wilderness
- Opportunities for solitude
- Safety and security

All public comments from the first meetings, newsletter response forms, letters, and web responses can be found at the planning web site:
<http://planning.den.nps.gov/plans.cfm>



Your Involvement is Needed! – Future Meetings

Additional public input will be sought to more closely examine the issues and opportunities, the mission goals, and to identify a range of alternatives. The meetings will be held in the general vicinity of the major issues, focusing detailed discussion on those issues. Each meeting will also need to address the future of the whole monument, and the public is welcome to attend any or all sessions.

Glade Park—Glade Park Community Center

(1/4 mile from Glade Park Store)

June 25, 2002 (Tuesday) 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

- East entrance – first four miles: commuter traffic, access, bicycles, maintenance, visitors, Little Park Road
- Rural character
- Fire management
- Education and outreach

Fruita—Fruita City Hall/Civic Center

(City Council Room, 325 E. Aspen, Fruita)

June 26, 2002 (Wednesday)

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

- “Gateway” community
- Paleontological resource management
- Connecting trails
- Interagency information
- Education and outreach

Grand Junction/Redlands—Redlands United Methodist Church

(527 Village Way & Broadway)

June 27, 2002 (Thursday) 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

- Trail access, trail heads

- Vandalism to park resources
- Trespass to private property
- Watershed issues
- Fire management
- Highway 340
- Views
- Boundary and fence
- Wildlife
- NPS loss of east entrance housing and after hours patrol
- Education and outreach

General Public and Visitors—Colorado National Monument Visitor Center Auditorium

June 25, 2002 (Tuesday) 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

June 26, 2002 (Wednesday)

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

- Appropriate experience
- Interpretation
- Camping
- Trails
- Services
- Facilities



BLM Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Update

The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area, which is administered by the Bureau of Land Management and is directly adjacent to Colorado National Monument, is in the midst of its Resource Management Planning (RMP) process with citizen workgroups meeting regularly to determine issues and alternatives for four different planning zones. The zones include the 75,000 acre Black Ridge Wilderness, the popular Rabbit Valley Area, Mack Ridge, and a 23-mile corridor of the Colorado River. The process of drafting alternatives will begin this summer as the working groups take a well-deserved hiatus. It is hoped that a draft RMP will be completed by the end of the calendar year. The BLM continues to work with the National Park Service to pursue mutual planning opportunities that will benefit both areas.

Mission Goals

Mission goals are visions for the future. They describe the ideal park managers are striving to attain in very broad terms. They tier off of main goal categories that are set for the entire National Park system (shown in **bold**). The focus is on desired future conditions, not specific actions. Based upon the issues and opportunities facing Colorado National Monument, the following mission goals have been identified:

Natural and cultural resources and associated values at Colorado National Monument are protected, restored, and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.

- Geological formations and natural processes and scenic vistas are protected.
- The integrity of the historic Rim Road is protected.
- Integrated natural and cultural resources and processes are identified, restored as appropriate, and preserved and protected within their regional ecosystem / human use context.
- Lands recommended by the President to Congress as wilderness are managed for wilderness values.

The National Park Service at Colorado National Monument contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values: management decisions about resources are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

- Scientific research, inventory, and monitoring broaden understanding of resources, processes, and human use, and identify potential impacts or impairments to those values.
- The understanding of the relationship of resources, processes, and socio-economic values of Colorado National Monument to the rest of the Colorado Plateau is increased.
- Research and science is readily shared with the public, communities, agencies, and decision-makers.

Visitors to Colorado National Monument safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park's facilities, services, and appropriate recreational activities.

- Provide consolidated, consistent inter-agency information for public lands in the region.

Colorado National Monument visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of Colorado National Monument and its resources for this and future generations.

- The park is an outdoor classroom
- Visitors and the general public develop a national conservation consciousness.
- People are aware of the range of recreational and educational opportunities available region-wide by multiple agencies, and understand important differences in how those lands are managed.
- The park story is more effectively communicated.

The National Park Service at Colorado National Monument uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.

- Management's ability to protect resources, to serve, educate, and protect the public, and to maintain facilities is enhanced.
- Boundary issues are resolved

The National Park Service at Colorado National Monument increases its managerial capabilities through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations, and individuals.

- Partnerships with neighboring communities that protect common goals such as natural and cultural values and rural character are established.
- Opportunities for cooperative interagency management activities, especially with the adjacent BLM Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area, are identified and established.
- Public, interagency, and inter-tribal participation in park management is continued and improved.

Preliminary Alternative Concepts

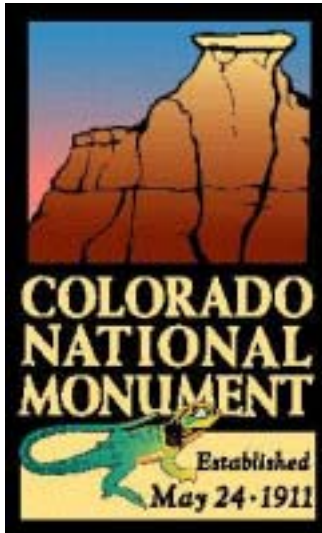
Some very preliminary alternative concepts have been developed to meet the mission goals and address the issues identified. Here are just a few overall concepts for your consideration, along with some examples which address specific goals and issues. Your ideas and comments for additional alternatives and ideas are welcome.

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Overall concept and emphasis	No action – continue existing management.	Strengthen individual relationships with visitors and the public. – more user friendly – increase opportunities to experience the park – build constituents	Integration of public lands. – identify and focus what Colorado National Monument does best – work with other agencies on holistic management of the ecosystem
Additional attributes		Also increases inter-agency coordination.	Also improves visitor experiences.
Example: Resource Management Flora and Fauna	Preserve and protect.	Preserve and protect Participation of volunteers in inventory, monitoring, control of exotic plants, etc.	Preserve, protect, and restore Coordinated control of exotic plants by multiple agencies. Re-introduce prairie dogs, plants Improve habitat – modify P-J to grass. Integrated natural resource and fire management.
Example: Science and Knowledge Inventory and Monitoring	Reactive.	Proactive. Emphasize science for public understanding and to avoid impacts.	Proactive. Emphasize science for inter-agency management and restoration of ecosystem.
Example: Visitor Experience Camping in Campground	Maintain.	Enhance rustic character, group and individual sites.	Eliminate campground entirely, OR----- Concentrate on improving group campground to accommodate schools and universities, eliminate and rehabilitate individual sites. Direct individuals to other campgrounds outside (and apply savings to higher priorities).
Example: Visitor Experience Trails and Trail Heads	Maintain.	Maintain and upgrade trail system with additional designated trails, especially loops and links. Improve trail head parking, comfort stations, horse access. Adopt a trail program.	Rehabilitate and provide good maintenance for existing trail system Identify what COLM trails offer, how COLM fits, link to regional trails. Region-wide brochure, consistent description and standards. Multi-agency trail crews. Link to regional transportation.
Example: Visitor Experience Rimrock Road Conflicts	Conflict continues and increases.	Explore variety of tools – 1-way, lane closures, temporary closures of segments to better accommodate bicycles, walkers, variety of activities (access to Glade Park through east entrance always maintained).	Emphasize special role of historic Rimrock Road in regional recreational opportunities, keep road open to general public maximum time.
Example: Visitor Experience Dogs on Trails	No.	Yes on certain designated trails, links.	No, identify where this is available on other public lands.
Example: Visitor Experience Interagency Information	Scattered.	One big interagency center.	Network of coordinated interagency centers (utilizing primarily existing centers).



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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The general management planning process takes about 2 ½ to 3 years, and includes numerous opportunities for public involvement. The process is just beginning.

General Management Plan (GMP) Process

